

Records - 5

## Office Memorandum • UNITED STATES GOVERNMENT

TO : Chief, Administrative Services

DATE: 19 March 1951

FROM : CIA Records Officer

SUBJECT: OSO Microfilming Project

1. Under existing circumstances Administrative Services should state to the Management Office its withdrawal of objections to the purchase by OSO of whatever microfilm equipment OSO desires. This conclusion has been reached after considering the facts in the following paragraphs.

2. The Zeller committee on Vital Documents allotted a small space in the Vital Documents Repository to OSO for the storage of a limited quantity of carefully selected paper records. The present plan to film 18 million documents has been reached by OSO since the dissolution of the Zeller committee.

3. Division of responsibility for the Vital Records program since the Zeller committee went out of business is not clearly delineated. Authority to designate additional records for Vital Records storage apparently has been left to each office. The Management Office appears to have exercised a control over the OSO project, however, because the assignment of a T/O to do the work is necessary to starting the project.

4. The CIA Records Officer has considered it his responsibility to serve OSO as a consultant on all phases of records management including advising on microfilm equipment and procedure.

5. The Management Office, the Reproduction Branch of Services and the two activities of OSO under [redacted] respectively, have all had something to say about procurement of equipment for the OSO project. The following facts about microfilm equipment for the OSO job are given:

(a) The CIA Records Officer was asked by the Management Office to advise OSO on microfilming equipment.

(b) [redacted] of OSO originally recommended that Diebold Flo-Film equipment, using 35 mm film be chosen. [redacted] formerly of this office, concurred and agreed to make personal contact with Diebold to speed delivery of equipment if ordered.

(c) [redacted] of Management Office invited [redacted] and the writer to a meeting with OSO for the discussion of equipment types. [redacted] requested OSO to state why 16 mm equipment could not be used.

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The writer suggested an experiment with a flatbed 35mm camera to check against an experiment with a Diebold 35mm camera. [redacted] accepted OSO's insistence on 35mm equipment and OSO agreed to try a flat bed camera, though reluctantly.

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(d) Neither [redacted] nor the CIA Records Officer were asked to participate in the flat-bed experiment. Even before results of the filming were received, OSO began pressing for purchase of Flat-bed equipment. Their Purchase Order was not acted upon for lack of funds.

(e) The OSO experiment with a Diebold camera was made under strong objections by people in [redacted] portion of OSO. Again neither the writer nor [redacted] participated in the experiment though [redacted] did observe briefly the operator while filming documents. [redacted] has told me the operator had unusual difficulties because of unfamiliarity with the machine. He stated his opinion that the test was not entirely a fair one.

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(f) Production figures on these two experiments show that disassembly and reassembly of documents for in the Flo-Film equipment required three or four times the number of man hours used in filming. The filming rate with the Diebold camera while slightly higher than with the Flat-bed camera does not compensate for the disassembly and reassembly operations.

(g) OSO is satisfied with the quality and quantity of work done on the Flat-bed camera. They are not satisfied with work done on the Diebold camera because, as [redacted] has pointed out, the untrained operator had too much trouble with the camera.

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(h) OSO now believes the camera they order will be needed by them in whole or in part for filming incoming material after the present accumulation has all been filmed.

6. In conclusion it is recommended the case be closed by withdrawal of Administrative Services objections to procurement of Flat-bed cameras. The reasons for this are:

(a) Such equipment produces good results, and may be used for other jobs when this one is finished;

(b) Administrative Services has no control authority in writing over covert microfilming activities.

7. It is suggested that in the new Administrative Instructions to be issued by the Management Office a designation of the responsibility for the approval of microfilming projects be made. This Instruction should state the extent of responsibility delegated to the CIA Records Officer for the selection of microfilming equipment, for the developing of procedure and for the training of microfilming personnel. The Instruction should also indicate to whom microfilming personnel should be assigned.

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STAT

4-23

[Redacted]

TO

FROM

SUBJECT

RE: What kind of microfilm machines to buy, whom to charge them to, etc.

MEW

Camera, model E, Recordak, flatbed, 2 ea.  
35 mm

Camera, Diebold 7 lofilm microfilm,  
model 90-01, 35 mm, equipped  
with an 11X reduction lens, model  
no. 90-50, focal length 40 mm 1 ea

Processor, Diebold 7 lofilm, model  
no. 91-01, 35 mm 1 ea.

Film, Diebold 7 lofilm fine grain safety  
negative panchromatic, model  
no. 90-75, 35 mm long 100 feet,  
on daylight loading reel, notched  
for use in 7 lofilm cameras,  
including extra footage for daylight  
loading and including D-19 developer and fixer 500 rolls

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CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY  
OFFICIAL ROUTING SLIP

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FROM		INITIALS	DATE
1	ADMIN/OSO	<i>[Signature]</i>	19 Mar 51
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REMARKS:

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